on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) Phase-IIIB. For this, preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) is in progress. At present, no stretch of NH-17 is having four-lane carriageway.

Completion of Bidar-Srirangapatnam-Ooty N.H.

1745. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the Bidar-Srirangapatnam-Ooty National Highway project;

(b) whether Government have any clear plan for this project; and

(c) if so, the time limit and cost of this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) Two stretches of Bidar-Srirangapatnam-Ooty road namely Humanabad—Jewargi road and Mysore—Ooty road have been declared as National Highways. The Humanabad-Jewargi road has not been handed over by Karnataka Government. The Mysore-Ooty road in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are being developed and maintained as per the availability of fund and *inter-se* priority of works. There is no proposal to declare the remaining stretches of the road as a National Highway since emphasis is given for the development of existing National Highways.

Upgradation of Non-Major Ports

1746. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Governments have called for soft funding from Central Government for constructing minor ports;

(b) if so, whether State Governments have also called for good rail and road connectivity to minor ports;

(c) whether Government plan to prepare over 100 non-major ports in the country to handle large vessels and chalked out comprehensive strategy to enhance port capacity from 600 million tonnes to 2000 million tonnes by 2016;

(d) whether Government are planning to upgrade non-major ports as one of the strategy; and

(e) if so, whether any action plan for upgrading ports have been finalized?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (e) During an interactive session on the Port Sector between the Department of Shipping and port authorities in the Maritime State Governments and Union Territory Administrations held on 3rd July, 2006, a scenario where the Indian ports, both major and non-major, need to plan for building up an aggregate capacity of at least 2000 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) by the year 2016-17 was visualized in the context of the rate at which the Indian economy is expected to grow in the near future. During the session, a number of Maritime State Governments expressed themselves in favour of a role for central financial assistance in the development of non-major ports. There was also general agreement that the road/rail connectivity to non-major ports needs to be upgraded. The non-major ports are, however, under the overall jurisdiction of the respective State Governments/Union Territory Administrations in whom the responsibility for their development and augmentation of capacities therein devolves.

Declaring Kakinada Canal as National Waterways

1747. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are seriously considering Kakinada-Pondicherry Canal along with rivers Godavari and Krishna to declare as National Waterways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any time-frame has been fixed by which this is going to be completed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A proposal for declaring Kakinada-Pondicherry stretch of Canals consisting of Kakinada Canal, Eluru Canal, Commamur Canal, Buckingham Canal and Kaluveli tank along with Bhadrachalam-Rajahmundry stretch of River Godavari and Wazirabad-Vijayawada stretch of River Krishna as a National Waterway is under consideration. The total length of the proposed National Waterway